

We claim:

1. A system for routing instant messaging (IM) messages and short message service (SMS) messages within a communication network, the system comprising:

a first network element including a first destination parser module operative to analyze first destination data of an SMS message to determine if the first destination data is a telephone number and, if the first destination data is not a telephone number, processing the SMS message for transmission through a gateway for a data network; and,

a second network element including a second destination parser module operative to analyze second destination data of an IM message to determine if the second destination data is an e-mail address and, if the second destination data is not an e-mail address, processing the IM message for transmission through a gateway for a wireless network.

2. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the first network element is a switching element.

3. The system as set forth in claim 2 wherein the switching element is a mobile switching center.

4. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the second network element is a router.

5. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the first network element further includes a protocol converter operative to process the first message for transmission through the gateway for the data network.

6. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the second network element further comprises a protocol converter for processing the IM message for transmission through the gateway for the wireless network.

7. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the first network element is operative to process the SMS message for transmission through the wireless network if the destination data is a telephone number.

8. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the second network element is operative to process the IM message for transmission through the data network if the second destination data is an e-mail address.

9. A method for handling instant messaging (IM) messages and short message service (SMS) messages within a communication network, the method comprising steps of:

receiving an SMS message having destination data included therein;

analyzing the destination data to determine if the destination data is a telephone number; and,

processing the SMS message for transmission through a gateway for a data network if the destination data is not a telephone number.

10. The method as set forth in claim 9 further comprising processing the SMS message for transmission through a gateway for a wireless network if the destination data is a telephone number.

11. A method for routing instant messaging (IM) messages and short message service (SMS) messages within a communication network, the method comprising steps of:

receiving an IM message having destination data included within;

analyzing the destination data to determine if the destination data is an e-mail address; and,

processing the IM message for transmission through a gateway for a wireless network if the destination data is not an e-mail address.

12. The method as set forth in claim 11 further comprising processing the IM message for transmission through a gateway for a data network if the destination data is an e-mail address.

13. A system for handling instant messaging (IM) messages and short message service (SMS) messages within a communication network, the system comprising:

means for receiving an SMS message having destination data included therein;

means for analyzing the destination data to determine if the destination data is a telephone number; and,

means for processing the SMS message for transmission through a gateway for a data network if the destination data is not a telephone number.

14. The system as set forth in claim 9 further comprising means for processing the SMS message for transmission through a gateway for a wireless network if the destination data is a telephone number.

15. A system for routing instant messaging (IM) messages and short message service (SMS) messages within a communication network, the system comprising:

means for receiving an IM message having destination data included within;

means for analyzing the destination data to determine if the destination data is an e-mail address; and,

means for processing the IM message for transmission through a gateway for a wireless network if the destination data is not an e-mail address.

16. The system as set forth in claim 11 further comprising means for processing the IM message for transmission through a gateway for a data network if the destination data is an e-mail address.